



Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) Newsletter

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Welcome

Welcome to the July/August 2012 issue of the AWIB Newsletter!

With summer nearly over, we know that schools and training programs are gearing up for fall, and employers are preparing for their fall and winter seasons.

AWIB Update

With this issue, the AWIB newsletter enters its fourth year of publication. The newsletter provides a way to connect schools, training programs, industry, and other stakeholders with the AWIB and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD). Published approximately every other month, it features opportunities, programs, and information about Alaska workforce development and education initiatives aimed at helping youth and adults find meaningful training and employment.

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Please contact us at marcia.olson@alaska.gov if you have ideas for future articles. The next newsletter will be published in October 2012.

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AWIB Update

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The Department of Labor and Workforce Development Division of Business Partnerships, Employment Security Division and Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) are currently preparing the State of Alaska Integrated Workforce Plan. The Workforce Investment Act requires that each state Governor submit a plan to the U.S. Department of Labor outlining a five-year strategy for the state's workforce investment system.

Important Dates

October 14-16, 2012

[AK School Principals' Fall Conference in Anchorage](#)

October 15-17, 2012

[First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference in Anchorage](#)

October 18-20, 2012

[Alaska Federation of Natives Annual Convention in Anchorage](#)

October 23-24, 2012

[AWIB Meeting in Fairbanks](#)

October 29-31, 2012

[AACTE Professional Development Conference in Anchorage](#)

November 1-4, 2012

[AK Association of School Boards Conference and Youth Leadership Institute in Anchorage](#)

November 14-17, 2012

[AK School Counselor Association Conference in Anchorage](#)

Governor Sean Parnell is committed to creating a climate for investment and economic growth in the State of Alaska. Economic development is underpinned by a strong workforce development system, providing all Alaskans with opportunities to participate in the Alaska workforce.

The AWIB adopted a vision of “building connections that put Alaskans into good jobs” that reflects Governor Parnell’s commitment to economic growth. This vision keeps the focus on developing a workforce system that is useful, accessible and understandable to all of the system’s users and customers. Customers include businesses looking for qualified workers, unemployed Alaskans looking for jobs, and incumbent workers seeking to upgrade their skills in a changing work environment. They also include youth new to the workforce and eager to find opportunity in a tight labor market.

The integrated workforce plan reflects the Governor’s economic and workforce development priorities and the AWIB’s belief that Alaska’s workforce investment system is an economic development resource with many benefits to Alaskans.

The plan will be open to public comment later this month on the department’s [website](#). It will then be reviewed by Commissioner Blumer and Governor Parnell before final submission on September 17, 2012.

Below you will find a list of [upcoming AWIB meetings](#). Please contact me if you have questions or concerns.

Committees:

Websites of Interest

- [Apprenticeship](#)
 - [AVTEC](#)
 - [AWIB](#)
 - [AWIB CTE](#)
 - [DOLWD](#)
 - [EED CTE](#)
 - [UA Workforce Programs](#)
 - Executive Committee - Tuesday, 9/11/12 at 1:30 p.m.
 - Workforce Readiness/Employment Placement Committee - Wednesday, 9/19/12 at 3:00 p.m.
 - Assessment and Evaluation Committee - Thursday, 9/20/12 at 3:00 p.m.
 - Policy and Planning Committee - Thursday, 9/27/12 at 10:00 a.m.
 - AWIB Meeting: October 23 and 24, 2012 in Fairbanks
 - Youth Council – Wednesday, 11/7/12 at 10:00 a.m.
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Career and Technical Education Update

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This summer marked the completion of the first year of the AWIB's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Implementation grant projects. Fourteen grantees from secondary and postsecondary programs made use of over \$500,000 appropriated by the state legislature for implementation of the Alaska CTE Plan. The projects were as diverse as the participating organizations, and ranged from upgrading CTE equipment and developing new career pathways and curricula to creating distance education courses for rural areas and implementing a computer-assisted design and manufacturing program that involved high schools in four Alaska towns as well as an out-of-state school. Summaries of the FY12 projects will soon be posted on the [AWIB CTE website](#).

The FY13 CTE Implementation Grant program is underway, with over a dozen applications now being reviewed. Those grant awards will be announced in September.

Alaska Association for Career & Technical Education (AACTE) Hosts Professional Development Conference

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The Alaska Association for Career & Technical Education (AACTE) will host its 25th Annual Professional Development Conference (PDC) at the Anchorage Downtown Marriott the last week in October.

- **Monday, October 29** - pre-conference
- **Tuesday and Wednesday, October 30-31** - main conference

Developing CTE leadership continues as a theme. **Jan Bray**, Executive Director for the Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE), will be the keynote speaker on Tuesday and will offer her national insight on CTE. **Karen Mason**, the National ACTE President, will be the highlighted speaker during the Leadership Strand. Both Ms. Bray and Ms. Mason will offer additional sectionals on leadership during the conference. **Alton Jamison**, a former engineer and entrepreneur, is scheduled to speak on Wednesday and will share the 7 Traits of Dynamic Leaders and how to strive for excellence in every area of your life to become a better example of excellence.

The Association is offering focused strand topics beginning on Monday and continuing through the conference:

- Alaska: the Crossroads of the World—Logistics/Transportation Strand
- Expanding Career Options by Connecting Education to Economic Development—Career Counseling Strand
- Strengthening CTE Leadership in Alaska—Leadership Strand
- Good Teachers Becoming Great Through Use of Technology—Teacher Tool Strand

Registration will open August 15 at www.actealaska.org. More information about the conference is available on the website or by emailing Kathy Andrews, AACTE Executive Secretary, at kathlynn.andrews@gmail.com.

AVTEC Offers a Variety of Programs

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AVTEC - Alaska's Institute of Technology is Alaska's oldest and largest institute for skills training in a wide variety of industrial and technological fields. The main campus is in Seward, and remote-site and distance delivery classes are available statewide. AVTEC offers 16 long-term training programs ranging from six weeks to 11 months and roughly 60 short-term training programs that span one to six weeks. Highlights for fall 2012 include the following –



AVTEC recently dedicated the new 100 kilowatts rated power Northwind 100 Wind Turbine. [Click here](#) to read the press release.

AVTEC is again offering the highly successful Introduction to Nautical Skills online course, a 12-week class available to high school juniors and seniors. Taught by AVTEC's Maritime Training Center's licensed captains, it is designed to introduce students to the maritime industry and provide them with a solid foundation for working in a boating occupation. Students attend class sessions once a week via Video Teleconference (VTC) and devote approximately two to four hours a week in classroom sessions to complete online assignments. An on-site mentor is available to assist each student.

The final two [Village Internet Agent \(VIA\) training courses](#) will begin in August 2012 and January 2013, to train technicians to maintain personal computers and networks in Alaska's remote villages. The VIA program provides free tuition, books and supplies to qualified students; students will be responsible for their housing, meals and travel.

Beginning this fall, AVTEC will be offering the school's first Associate of Applied Science in Nursing program at the Allied Health campus in Anchorage. The first Registered Nurse classes will be held September 4, 2012 through March 29, 2013; the next opportunity will be March 2013.

Information on these and other AVTEC programs is available online at www.avtec.edu by selecting the ["Training Programs/Courses"](#) link or by calling 800.478.5389 or 907.224.3322.

Free Safety and Health Consultation & Training for Employers

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The word OSHA - Occupational Safety and Health Administration - can strike fear in the heart of an unprepared employer. There are a significant number of regulations associated with providing employees with a safe and healthy workplace, and many employers find the necessary tasks to be overwhelming. Ignoring the requirements can result in a costly enforcement inspection or, worse yet, a serious accident in the workplace. Alaska's Workers' Compensation Insurance rates remain near the highest in the nation, and the most direct way to affect costs is to eliminate workplace accidents.

Just about everybody has heard of the OSHA Enforcement Program, but most people are surprised to hear that the State of Alaska has a Consultation and Training Program to assist employers in navigating the turbid waters of safety and health regulatory requirements. This program requires one simple step; i.e., the employer must make a request for service, which is provided at no cost to the employer.

Upon request, a Safety and Health Consultant will visit an employer's worksite and perform an on-site evaluation of safety and health hazards and programs. The employer then receives a written report of any identified deficiencies and step-by-step guidance to eliminate hazards and come into compliance with workplace safety and health requirements. Employers who have utilized these services are extremely satisfied and many report reductions in Workers' Compensation reportable incidents after receiving the consultation visit.

To make a request, download a request form at <http://labor.state.ak.us/lss/forms/training.pdf> or contact the Alaska Occupational Safety and Health (AKOSH) Consultation and Training Section at 800.656.4972 or 907.269.4955 for further information.

CTE and Nontraditional Occupation (NTO) Activities

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Non-traditional occupations (NTOs) are defined as occupations where one gender represents less than 25% of the workforce. School districts and postsecondary institutions that receive federal Carl Perkins funding are required to address federal NTO benchmarks to provide all learners the opportunity to pursue work in their chosen field. Alaska companies are better able to meet their needs for qualified workers if all Alaskans have the opportunity to pursue their career goals.

For the last three years, EED-CTE has funded several specific demonstration projects that use strategies to identify, recruit and retain NTO students, including the following:

- **University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF)-College of Rural and Community Development** received a Perkins NTO grant to support rural Alaska male students pursuing careers in healthcare. Over the last three years, 24 students have participated and have obtained Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees, industry certifications, and occupational endorsements in health-related fields.
- **Hiland Mountain Correctional Center**, with a female population, received an NTO grant to help develop its training programs in the trades in partnership with Ilisagvik College. Construction-related classes such as Math in the Construction Trades, Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER), North Slope Training Card, and Traffic Control Technician are offered to women who are nearing their release date. Completion of these courses provides a much-needed boost to the women as they re-enter the labor market.

EED-CTE is releasing a new Request for Proposals (RFP) for NTO programs and activities to be developed and implemented over the next three years. If you're interested in applying, download the RFP here <http://www.eed.alaska.gov/forms/CTE/05-10-024.pdf>. Applications are due by August 17, 2012.

Also, for schools and businesses interested in improving their programs to identify, recruit and retain NTO students and workers, EED-CTE has purchased a state license for resource materials from Institute for Women in Trades, Technology and Science <http://www.iwitts.org/>. This license includes a vast array of NTO resources such as materials for presentations, forms, brochures, etc., to support your program. These resources are provided at no charge to any Alaska company, school, or any other interested Alaskans. Contact Don Levine don.levine@alaska.gov at [EED-CTE](#) for more information and site access.

University of Alaska's Fisheries Seafood Maritime Initiative Focuses on Industry Needs

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Fisheries, seafood and maritime sectors provide more than 68,000 jobs in Alaska according to a recent study by the McDowell Group. The study was commissioned as part of the University of Alaska's Fisheries Seafood Maritime Initiative (FSMI) to understand and address workforce development needs for these fields, and work to make that training available at campuses throughout the system.

The FSMI initiative focuses on enhancing the economy of communities impacted by maritime, seafood or fishing sectors by developing a workforce to keep those industries vibrant. Outreach to Alaskan youth will introduce them to the wide range of employment opportunities in these industries. Research focused on sustaining coastal and fresh water resources will benefit the communities and industries dependent upon them.

A committee of 18 University of Alaska program heads and faculty has been commissioned to coordinate programs directed toward fishing, seafood or maritime employment and increasing the visibility of this promising career path. They met with industry representatives in early March to discuss the industry's workforce needs and use that input to guide educational program offerings. While training is available in many related areas—from welding and fabrication to refrigeration and fisheries science—the classes are not coordinated into a specific career pathway. Additional programs and training targeting this workforce will be developed as needed.

The governor and legislature have participated in meetings related to the initiative. They passed House Concurrent Resolution 18, which resolves to “encourage the continuing work of the University of Alaska fisheries, seafood and maritime initiative.” The resolution appoints one member of the House and Senate to act as liaisons to the University of Alaska and report progress back to the full Legislature next year.

A copy of the McDowell report and an overview of ongoing activities related to the initiative can be found at www.alaska.edu/fsmi.

Veteran Employment Tax Credit

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Employment Security Division's veteran representatives and job center staff across the state are informing employers about the new state veteran employment tax credit (Senate Bill 136) that became effective July 1, 2012. It is designed to provide an incentive for corporate employers to hire veterans. The tax credit may encourage Alaska employers, including those in the highest demand occupations and industries, to give greater consideration to hiring veterans.

Corporate employers are entitled to a tax credit for each qualified veteran hired. Corporate employers may receive:

- \$3,000 for employing a disabled veteran;
- \$2,000 for employing a veteran who is not disabled; and
- \$1,000 for employing a veteran in a seasonal position.

The tax credit is applied toward an employer's state corporate income tax liability, reducing the amount of tax due at the end of the tax year. Combined with substantial veteran-hire employer tax credits under the federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit, the employer stands to save a significant amount of payroll taxes. Both tax credits present opportunities for veterans to obtain employment in Alaska and are just two of many great reasons for employers to hire veterans.
